Design Resource

Crochet Jewelry of Gaya

The Craft of Crochet

by
Sakshi Gambhir
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/crochet-jewelry-gaya

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Introduction

Crochet is a process of creating fabric from yarn, thread, or other material strands using a crochet hook. This craft isn't 'traditional' or 'regional' to Gaya and was started there fairly recently by an organization called Samoolam to helpthe women earn their pride and livelihood. The organization imparts training to these people with rare or no background of craft skills and aimsto realize their potential towards a positive social change.UshaPrajapati, the founder of Samoolam says: 'We are on our path of creating a craft tradition of this region. A decade later, people will know the women of Gaya as respectful crochet artisans who are strengthening their self-respect in the society.' At present, the organization works withabout eighty women from three villages in Gaya and is focusing on jewelry products.

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Place

Gaya is situated on the banks of Falgu River andis the second largest city of Bihar. It has a mix of natural surroundings, age-old buildings, several temples and narrow bylanes. Documented history of Gaya dates back to the enlightenment of Gautam Buddha. About 11 kilometers from Gaya town is Bodh Gaya, the place where Gautam Buddha attained enlightenment under a Peepal tree (also called the Bodhi Tree). Gaya is also significant to Hindus from the point of view of salvation to the souls of ancestors, a ritual called pindadaan. According to Ramayana, when Lord Ram came to Gaya along with Sita to perform pindadaan, Sita cursed the Falgu River following some disobedience on the part of the river. Since then, the river lost its water and is simply a vast stretch of sand dunes. At the same time Sita blessed a banyan tree to be immortal. This tree is known as Akshyavat. This particular tree never sheds its leaves, which keeps it green even in times of drought.

Outside the Gaya railway station.

The railway tracks of Gaya.

The streets of Gaya.

The streets of Gaya.

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The streets of Gaya.

The streets of Gaya.

Outside a temple in Gaya.

Outside a temple in Gaya.

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Outside a temple in Gaya.

Inside a temple in Gaya.

One of Samoolam's craft centres in Kujaap.

One of Samoolam's craft centres in Kujaap.

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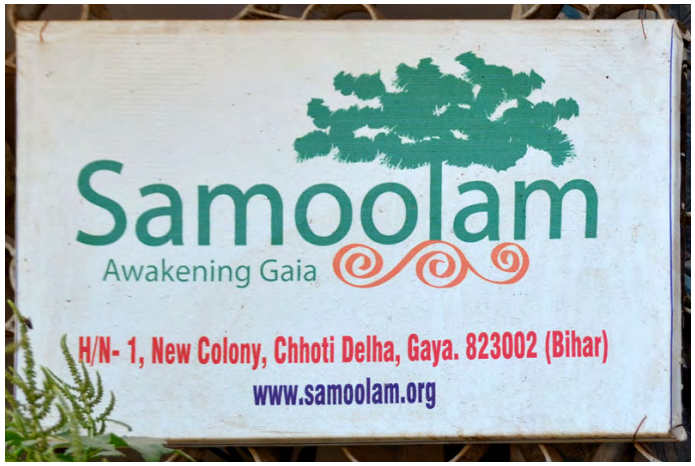
Usha's home, converted into Samoolam's craft centre.



Samoolam's signboard.

Samoolam's craftswomen.

Leaves of the Bodhi Tree.

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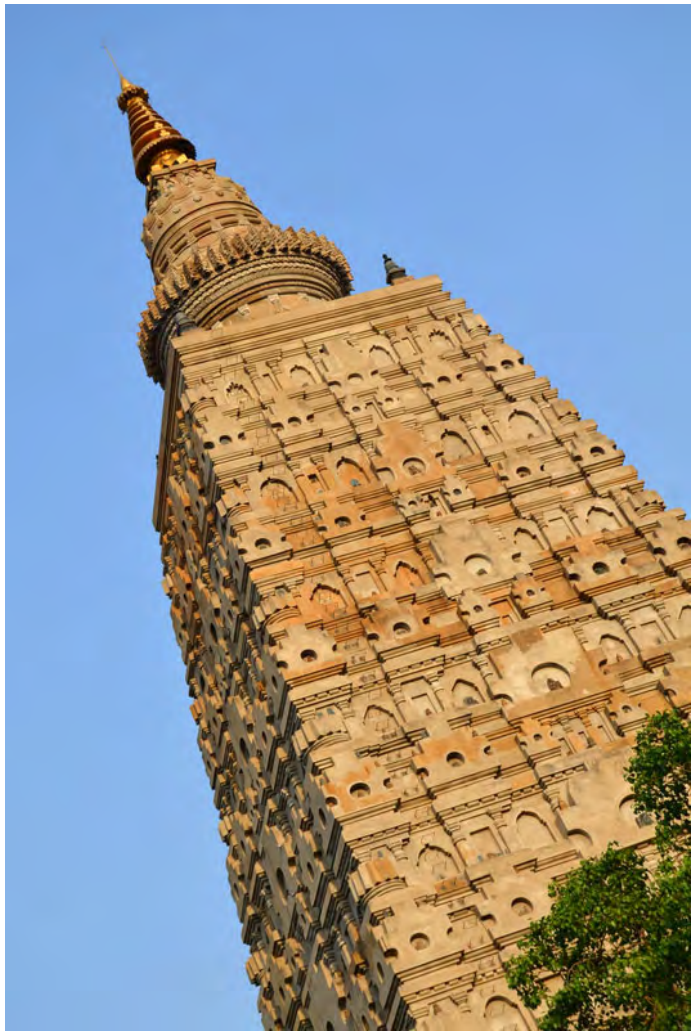
बुद्ध की ज्ञानस्थली, विश्व धरोहर महाबोधि महाविहार में आपका स्वागत है।
Welcome to the Land of Enlightenment
Mahabodhi Mahavihara
(A World Heritage Site)
BODHGAYA TEMPLE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
बोधगया मंदिर प्रबन्धकारिणी समिति

Outside the Mahabodhi temple.

The Mahabodhi temple.



The Mahabodhi temple.

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Details on the walls of the Mahabodhi temple.

Details on the walls of the Mahabodhi temple.

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The Mahabodhi temple campus.

Eighty feet tall Buddha statue.

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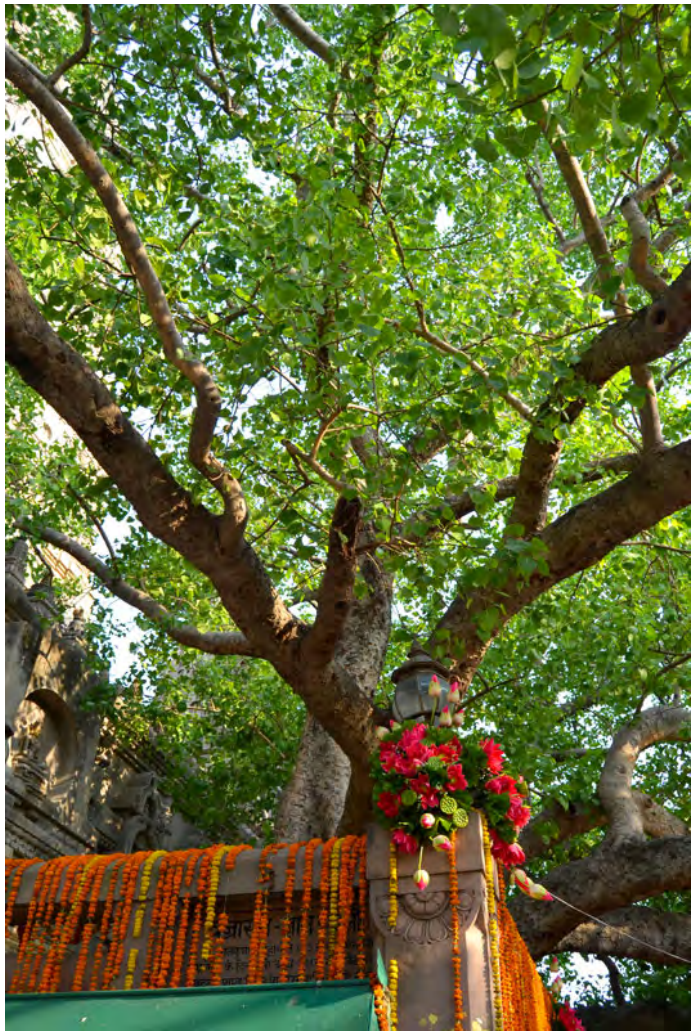

The Bodhi Tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment.

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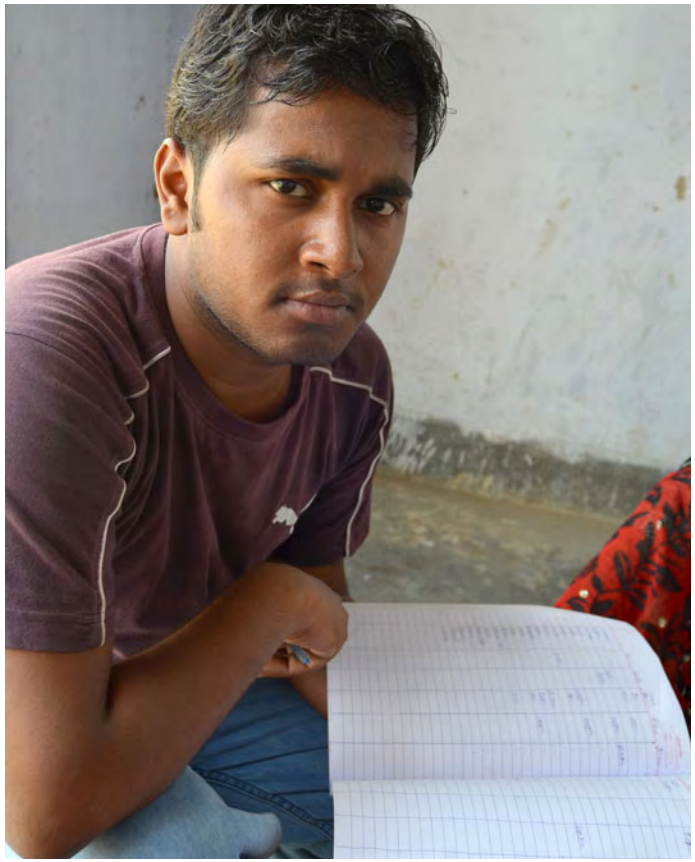
People

The people of Gaya are extremely down-to-earth and very welcoming. Amongst them are a bunch of women workers, who through Samoolam'sinitiative not only gain strength, knowledge and income but also self-dependence and freedom. Samoolam has grown up from a three-member to an eighty-member organization in two years where each member within the organization is working towards achieving a common vision and exploring their hidden skills. They women usually work out of their homes and come to the craft-centre twice or thrice every week to discuss the progress of work. Usha, the founder of the organization travels extensively to market these products. In her absence, her brother Baijnath and cousin Manik take care of all the activity at the centre. Ruby Devi, a very enterprising and fine crochet artisan, has taken the lead and become the manager of the Gaya chapter.

Usha Prajapati, the founder of Samoolam.



Manik, Usha's cousin who takes care of the craft centres.

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Ruby Devi, the manager of Samoolam's Gaya chapter.

A crochet artisan at the craft centre.

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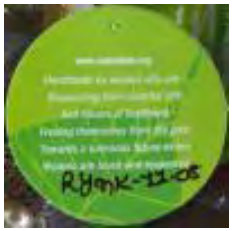
Process

There are three main steps to making a crochet jewelry piece:

Crocheting

Embellishing



Packaging

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Crocheting

Basic materials required for making any crochet product are a hook and some type of strand material like cotton, silk or zari yarn. The 'chains' form the basic guideline for making any kind of pattern in crochet. Samoolam usually works with simple crochet patterns like 'chakri' (circles) and roses to make the women familiar and comfortable with the material. Fairly recently, they have started exploring forms and materials like bronze and copper wires, bright colored electrical wires, ribbons etc. After these crochet pieces are completed, they are counted and kept aside for the next step.

Colorful yarns ready to be crocheted.

The yarn rolled on a wooden stick for ease of use.

The crochet hook.

Crochet begins.

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A crochet rose in the making.

A crochet rose in the making.

A crochet rose.

A crochet flower in the making.

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A crochet flower in the making.

A crochet flower in the making.

A crochet chakri (circle) in the making.

A crochet chakri (circle) in the making.

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Two chakris being joined.

Extra thread being cut.

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Two chakris being joined together so that the unfinished (back) side doesn't show.

Zari thread being crocheted.

Zari thread being crocheted on a wooden bead.

Zari thread being crocheted on a wooden bead.

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Zari thread being crocheted on a wooden bead.

Cotton yarn being crocheted on a wooden bead.

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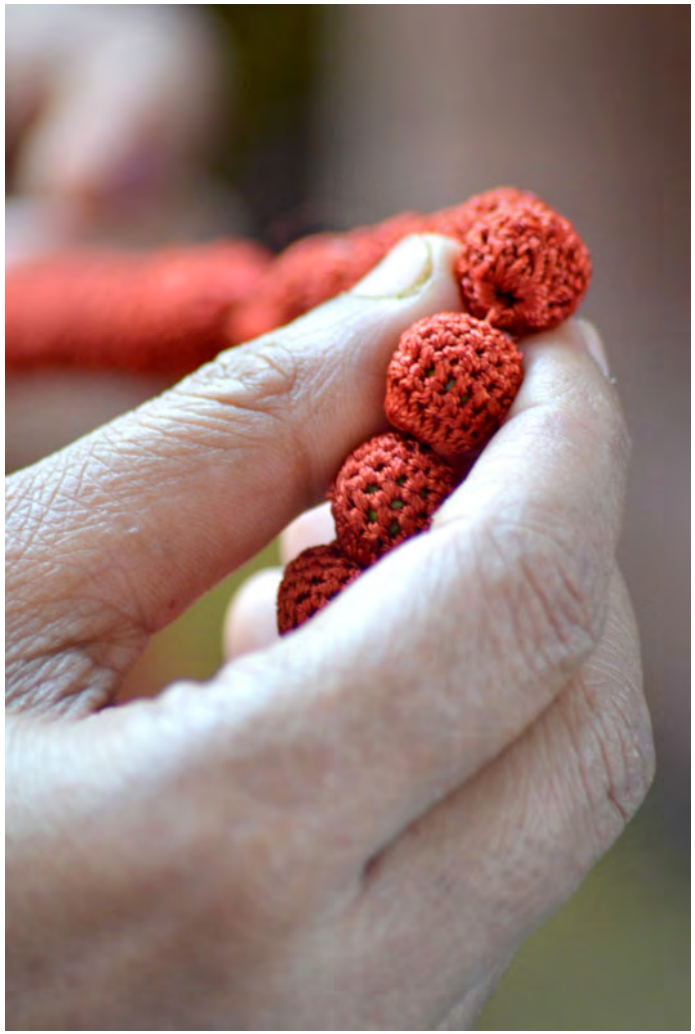

Crocheted beads being counted.

A flower being crocheted with zari thread.

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A crocheted zari flower.

A wooden ring covered with silk thread.

Wool being crocheted to form parts of a kids' blanket.

Crocheted wool patches to be joined to form a kids' blanket.

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Wool being crocheted.

Wool being crocheted on a plastic ball to form a hanging for the Christmas tree.

Wool crocheted plastic ball, a hanging for the Christmas tree.

Crocheted flowers.

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A crocheted flower and a small chakri to be stitched to its back side.

A painting by Baua Devi, Jiwarpur (Bharni style).

Chakris being counted.

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Chakris being counted.

Chakris being counted.

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Chakris being counted.

Flowers being counted.

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Flowers being counted.

Flowers being counted.

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Chakris and flowers being counted and noted in a register.

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Embellishing

The crocheted piece is 'finished' by closing the loose end of the working thread into the pattern and trimming extra ones (if any). Other tasks include attaching metallic earring loops, hair-pins, wooden jooda pins etc. to the chakris and flowers to complete the product.Simple crochet jewelry pieces can be made more interesting by introducing decorative materials like colored beads, sequins, charms, danglers etc.

Multicolored beadsand sequins.

Multicolored beads and sequins to be stitched on to crocheted flowers and chakris (kept above).

Multicolored beads.

Earring hooks to be attached to crocheted flowers and chakris.

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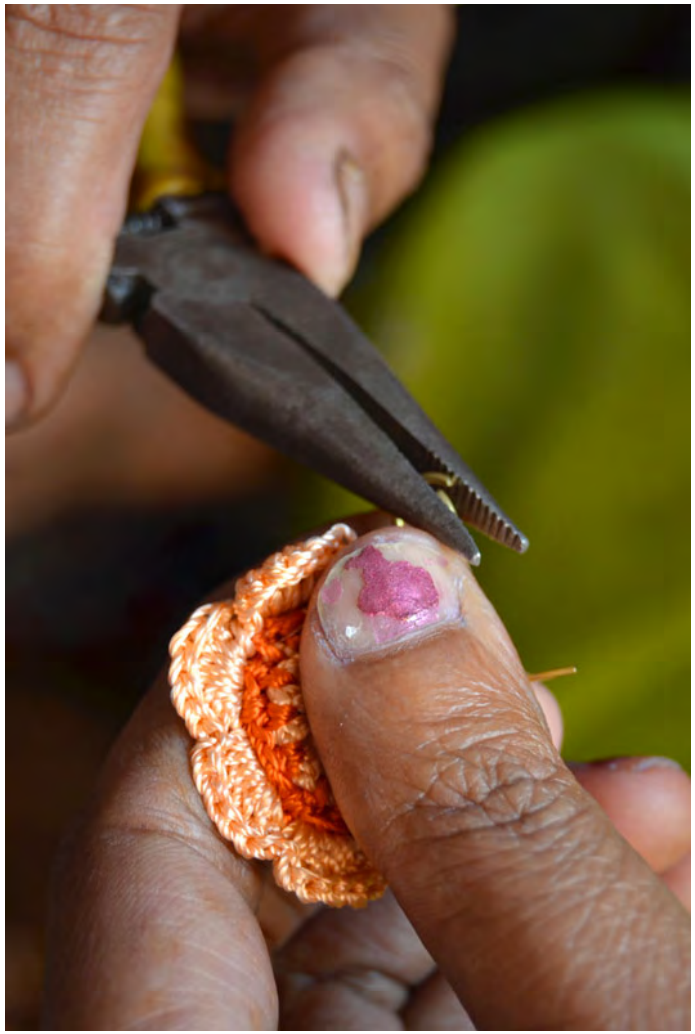
Earring hooks.


Earring hook being attached to a crocheted flower.

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Earring hook being attached to a crocheted flower.

Earring hook being attached to a crocheted flower.

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Earring hook attached to a crocheted flower.

A tiny bead being attached to a bigger crocheted one.

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Crocheted pieces being assembled to form a bunch.

Crocheted pieces being assembled to form a flower.

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Crocheted pieces being assembled to form a flower.

Crocheted pieces assembled to form a flower.

A multicolored silk chakri.

Tiny beads being stitched to the chakri.

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The chakri with beads.

A hair-clip being attached to the chakri.

A hair-clip being attached to the chakri.

Design Resource

Crochet Jewelry of Gaya

The Craft of Crochet

by
Sakshi Gambhir
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/crochet-jewelry-gaya/process/embellishing

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The hair-clip attached to the chakri.

A flower being made into a button.

A flower being made into a button by attaching a small wooden button at the back.

Dangling beads in an earring.

Design Resource

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Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/crochet-jewelry-gaya/process/packaging

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Packaging

Once the product is 'finished', the organization's tag is threaded into it. It is then kept inside a small self-seal plastic pouch or an organdy potli bag and sent to the retailers.

Women putting the products in the plastic pouch.

Women putting the products in the plastic pouch.

Women putting the products in the plastic pouch.

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Water animals painted by Mahalaxmi, Ranti (Kachni style).

www.samoolam.org
Handmade by women who are
Discovering their creative self
And means of livelihood
Freeing themselves from the past
Towards a luminous future where
Women are loved and respected

Samoolam's tag.

Samoolam's tag.

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Source:
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Products

Samoolam's current range of products includes hair clips, buttons, loop earrings, tops, dangling earrings, jooda pins, brooches, long necklaces, chokers and bookmarks. The women are currently working on a waste recycling project (crochet covers for old glass jars) and a festive range for Christmas (hangings like stars and balls for the Christmas tree). The packaging of the products is done very thoughtfully as well. It's a white organdypotli bag with a Bodhi leaf embroidered on it, very symbolic of Gaya!

Hair-clips.

Chakri hair-clips.

Flower hair-clips.

Flower hair-clips.

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Chakri hair-clips.

Tops.

Tops.

Loop earrings.

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Loop earrings.

Dangling flower earrings.

Dangling flower earrings.

Dangling chakri earrings.

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Dangling chakri earrings.

Dangling flower earrings.

Dangling flower earrings.

Jooda pin with dangling flowers.

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Jooda pin with dangling chakris.

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A long necklace that can be doubled up and worn.

A long necklace that can be doubled up and worn.

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A long necklace that can be doubled up and worn.

Parts of a long necklace that can be doubled up and worn.

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Parts of a long necklace that can be doubled up and worn.

Parts of a long necklace that can be doubled up and worn.

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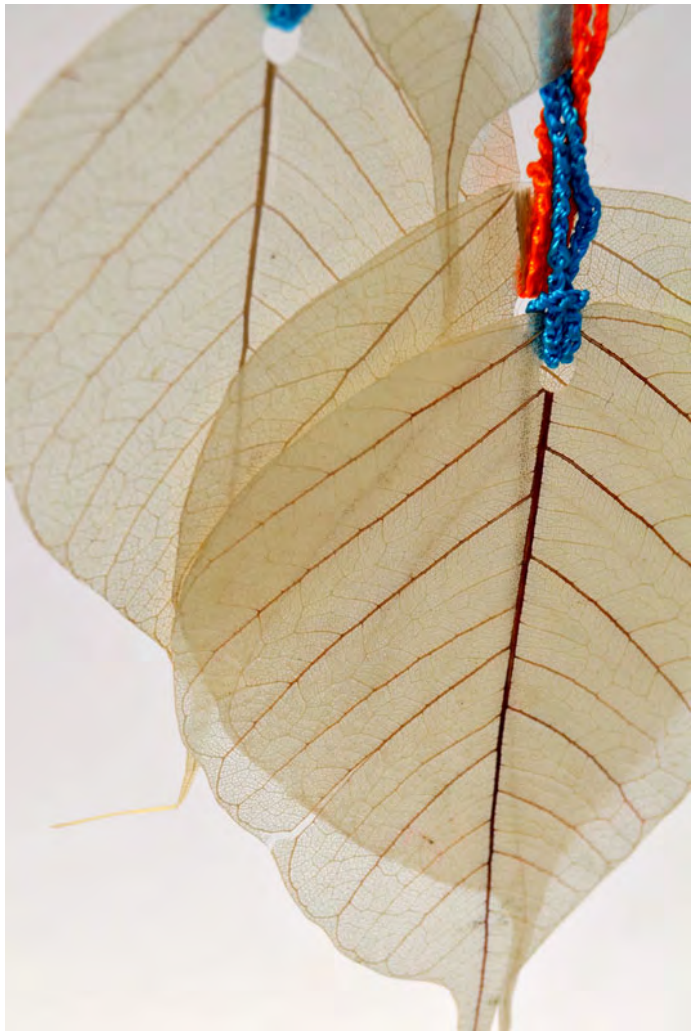

Bodhi leaf bookmarks with crochet strands.

Bodhi leaf bookmarks with crochet strands.

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Glass jar cover (in the making).

Glass jar cover.

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Ball hanging for the Christmas tree.

Stars hanging for the Christmas tree.

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Hangings for the Christmas tree.

Hanging for the Christmas tree.

Chakri buttons for the kurti.

Kids' blanket.

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The Bodhi leaf bag (packaging) for Samoolam's products.

Design Resource

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The Craft of Crochet
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IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
https://dsource.in/resource/crochet-jewelry-gaya/contact-details

1. Introduction
2. Place
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Contact Details

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